in question was in immature winter plumage, I could not determine the species.

87. Larus audouinii, Temm. Audouin's Gull.
Gould's Birds of Europe, vol. v. pl. 438.

On two or three occasions, at a considerable distance above Cairo, I noticed a large Gull with a bright red bill, which I believe to have been *Larus audouinii*. I never succeeded in procuring a specimen.

IV.—*On the different Methods of preparing Natural Skeletons of Birds.* By T. C. Eyton, F.Z.S., &c.

I propose in this paper merely to state the different methods which I have employed in preparing the *natural* skeletons in my collection. Not that I entirely object to *artificial* skeletons; but I prefer *natural*, particularly if purchased from dealers, as the former are so very liable to be adulterated, if I may so apply the word. I have now before me a beautifully mounted skeleton of a *Circus*, purchased of a dealer, which has *two left metatarsi*.

Birds generally come into collectors' hands either fresh with the flesh on, or partially cleaned and without having been macerated, or partially cleaned and having been also macerated. In the first case, I always remove as much of the flesh as I conveniently can, and macerate the skeleton in water, which has a small piece of the flesh, previously removed, placed in it, until the flesh which remains on the bones becomes soft and easily scraped off. After this I place the skeleton in clean water, and change the water frequently until it ceases to become discoloured. I then place the skeleton in a solution prepared in the following way:—Make a saturated solution of common alum, and when cool dilute it with an equal quantity of water, and add to it half an ounce of common salt for every half-pound of alum. This solution converts the ligaments into a species of leathery substance, and also destroys the colour of any blood that may have penetrated the bones. The time that is required to effect this varies according to the state and size of the skeleton. If it be clear of blood, twenty-four hours will be sufficient; but sometimes larger birds, of a bad colour, must be kept in the solution nearly a week. When the skeleton is removed from the solution of alum, the ligaments will be found to have become much stiffened, though not so much but that the skeleton can be easily put into position. The next step is to wash the skeleton slightly under a tap of water, if convenient, or if not, in a basin; this prevents the crystals of alum forming on the outside of the bones when dry. It is now ready for mounting, and will be easily brought into the position in which it is wished to be arranged in the following way:—Having fixed the feet to a stand, prepare a flat board, and upon it an upright square or rounded piece of wood, with numerous holes drilled horizontally through it at different distances, in which wire-pegs can be inserted, so as to be moveable to different heights. Fasten the second vertebra of the skeleton to the topmost peg with a thread, and other parts of the skeleton to such wire-pegs as may be found convenient, according to the attitude necessary. When the skeleton is dry, it will merely require to be varnished with mastic varnish, and is then complete. It is generally better to remove the head, for greater convenience in cleansing out the brain; this may be easily fastened on again with a piece of wire.

The most difficult skeletons to clean are those which have been dried with much flesh left on them, particularly when it has remained on them for any length of time. It is sometimes almost impossible to succeed in bringing the bones of such skeletons to a good colour. In this case macerate the bones first in plain water, and remove as much of the flesh as possible. Then place the skeleton in a strong solution of carbonate of potash, or even, if requisite, in a weaker one of caustic potash, though this only for a very few hours. Remove any flesh that could not previously be taken off, and then macerate it again in water for about twenty-four hours. The treatment is afterwards the same as in that of fresh skeletons. Those skeletons that have been previously slightly macerated will be found to be much more easily prepared than those that have not been dipped in water at all before packing, as in the former case the remaining flesh does not become nearly so hard and impervious to water.

If travellers who collect skeletons, after removing as much flesh as possible from the subject, would merely macerate it for an hour in water, it would save much labour and time in mounting. It is also as well to leave the large wing- and tail-feathers, and the skin of the scalp on the specimens, in order to assist in identifying the species, where the skins are not transmitted also.

Again, if collectors in preparing skins would extract the brain with a wire, instead of breaking up the whole of the back part of the skull, many valuable contributions to the osteology of Birds would be preserved, in the heads of their specimens.

V.—*Characters of apparently new species of Birds collected in the great Desert of the Sahara, southwards of Algeria and Tunis.* By the Rev. H. B. TRISTRAM, F.L.S.

1. CERTHILAUDA SALVINI, Tristram.

Suprà pallidè isabellina, superciliis indistinctis et corpore subtùs albis, pectore summo vix conspicuè nigro guttato; strigâ rictali indistinctè nigricante: alis nigricantibus, fasciis duabus latis, alterâ ad basin secundariorum, alterâ terminali, albis: secundariis tribus externis dorso concoloribus; primariis sex externis, nisi in parte basali, nigricantibus: caudâ nigrâ, rectricibus duabus extimis albo extùs marginatis, duabus mediis dorso concoloribus: tectricibus alarum inferioribus niveis: rostro pallidè fusco: pedibus schistacescenti-albis: long. totâ 7·8, alæ 4·5, caudæ 3·1, tarsi 1·3.

♀ mari similis.

Hab. in Saharâ Algeriensi.

Obs. Differt a *Certhilaudâ desertorum* staturâ minore, fasciis alarum albis latioribus, et secundariis multò minus elongatis.

2. GALERIDA MACRORHYNCHA, Tristram.

Cristata: corpore suprà arenicolori-fusco, plumarum parte mediâ nigricante: primariis nigricanti-brunneis, cervino extùs limbatis: caudâ nigricante, cervino limbatâ: rectricum externarum apicibus cervinis: subtùs sordide alba, antice rufescente tincta; gulâ et pectore nigro striatis; tectricibus alarum inferioribus pallidè cervinis; rostro fusco, mandibulâ inferiore multò pallidiore; pedibus pallidè carneis: long. totâ 7·8, alæ 4·5, caudæ 2·8, rostri à rictu 1·0, tarsi 1·05.

Hab. in Saharæ Algeriensis parte boreali.

Obs. Affinis *Galeridæ cristatæ,* sed staturâ majore et rostro elongato, incurvo distinguenda.